

Washington, DC- Today, the U.S. House of Representatives progressed on its agenda for the First 100 Hours by passing H.R. 4, The Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007. This bill repeals the current provision that prohibits the Secretary of Health and Human Services from negotiating lower drug prices with drug manufactures.

Congressman Charles Gonzalez issued the following statement on the passage of H.R. 4, The Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007: "In 2003, Congress passed a much needed prescription drug coverage plan for Medicare beneficiaries. At that time, I fought hard for a better program that was less confusing, provided more financial assistance and allowed the government to negotiate lower drug prices for prescriptions. Unfortunately, the plan that Congress passed has left many seniors confused and exposed to paying high out of pocket costs for their prescription drugs. H.R. 4 takes the first step in enhancing the opportunities of our nation's seniors to have affordable access to preventative and treatment drugs through the Medicare program. Allowing the Secretary of HHS to negotiate prices with drug manufactures is a necessary step in seeking real savings for 22 million Americans enrolled in Medicare drug plans.

I support the passage of this bill because I believe our seniors deserve a true prescription drug benefit that is affordable and covers the drugs they need."

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